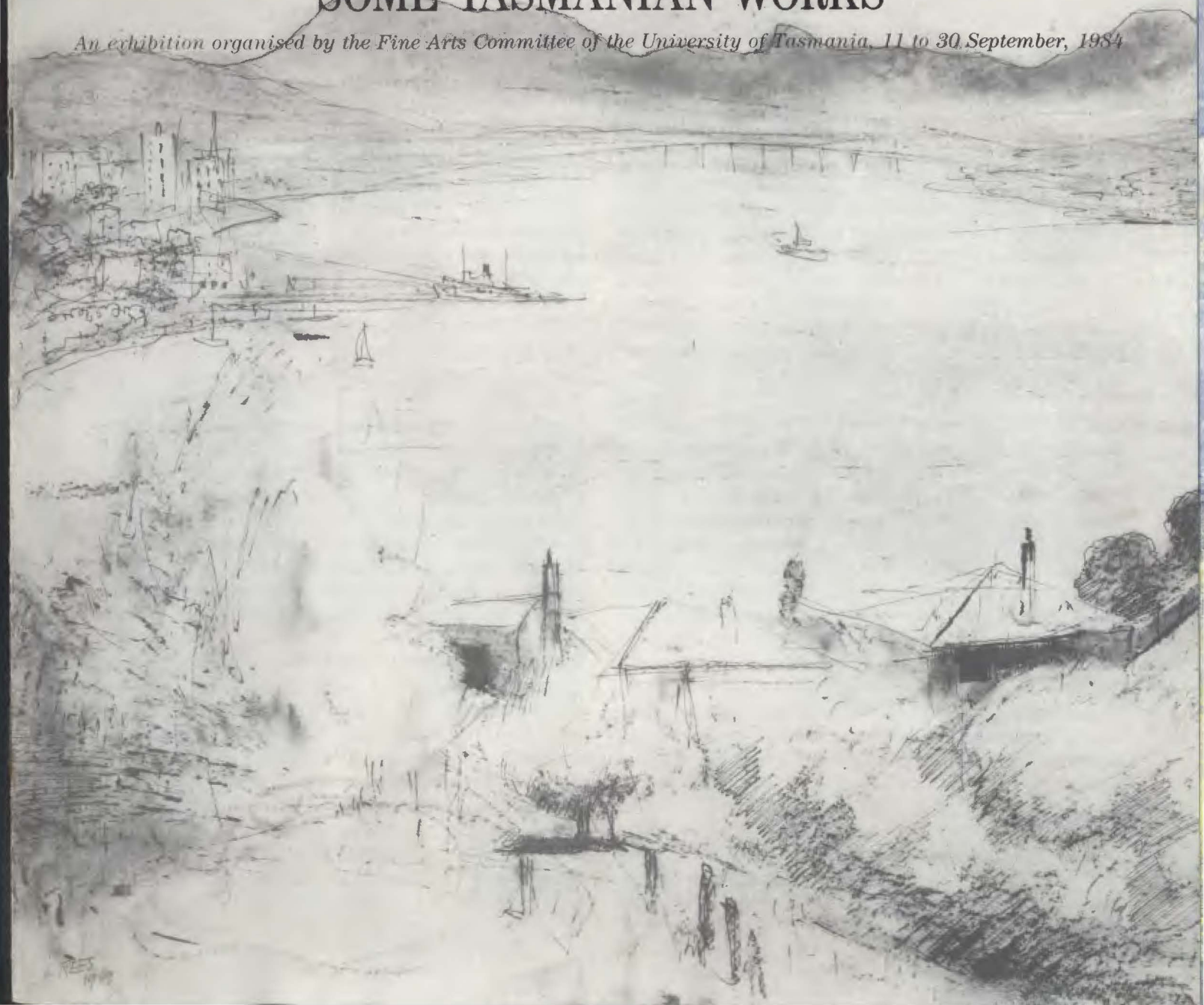


LLOYD REES

SOME TASMANIAN WORKS

An exhibition organised by the Fine Arts Committee of the University of Tasmania, 11 to 30 September, 1984



LLOYD REES AND TASMANIA

Tasmania comes into Lloyd Rees' life in the later period. Tasmania's historic architecture would have been characterised in detailed drawings in Rees' early manner, had fate not played a part. John Eldershaw had taken over the old mill building near the bridge at Richmond. In 1925 Rees was on a boat to visit him, however, shortly after leaving Sydney a strike was called. It was over forty years later that he painted the Richmond landscape from the river in front of the mill, and the watertank near the churchyard.

Tasmania means for Rees above all, his son, Alan and his family. Since 1967, Christmas and summer holidays have meant Sandy Bay, the Derwent, and mountain peaks. Rees has always worked from his home, or homes of relatives; now Tasmania could become part of the formation of his vision. Before ever coming to Tasmania he did a tiny watercolour on a Weet-Bix lid, of sailing on the Derwent, realising it was to become a serious pursuit of Alan and family. Hobart's superb setting offered exciting mountain forms, and hills 'which come down to the water in the proper manner', as his friend Alan Stout, the philosopher, would say.

Tasmania partakes of the two completely opposite later styles. The earlier of these, layers impression upon impression until the resulting encrusted paint surface becomes the ancient earth itself. *The Edge of the Forest* is such a work. Painted after the first visit to Tasmania, coming there fresh from Europe, this work is regarded by the artist as one of his most Australian. The paint becomes a weathered sandstone quarried cliff-face at

the back of the units near the university where he stayed. To us, it is suburbia, with washing lines and rubble, but that setting inspired this work, and *A Mountain Stream, Tasmania*, now in the Australian National Gallery. The artist has swept away the debris to find the essential characteristics.

In 1969, from his son's verandah he painted the watercolour and oil of *The Distant Derwent*. More topographical than usual, the watercolour is a favourite of the artist because it contains so much drawing. It shows how a note from nature is the starting point for the more generalized oils done back in the Sydney studio, be it a drawing like that for the *Edge of the Forest*, a rough sketch from which more finished watercolours are done, or lithographs which emerge in this later period. *The Distant Derwent* oil unusually preserves the topographical feeling, though the bay has been bathed in pale blue which has perhaps as much to do with the artist's consciousness of the beauty of the scene, as with the colours of Sandy Bay which vary according to the elements.

Though the Derwent is the dominant subject, several important works are of peaks, and rocks on Mt. Wellington. A hundred years earlier, Piguénit was similarly inspired by a romantic vision of Tasmania, and the lower North Shore of Sydney, Lane Cove, adjacent to Rees' suburb, Northwood. Piguénit was at his best depicting the darker side of nature, its awesomeness, its solitude. Rees found that he wanted to express in the later years, nature enveloped in light. There is a certain optimism, and love of the world, which this implies, but an understanding of

the opposite is part of Rees' history, and lends intensity of longing to his vision. Early illness and personal tragedy, and a lifelong fear of death, have as much to do with his late style, as does his personal happiness with his wife and family, achievement in art, and the possibility of many occasions to explore France and Italy, homes of his spirit.

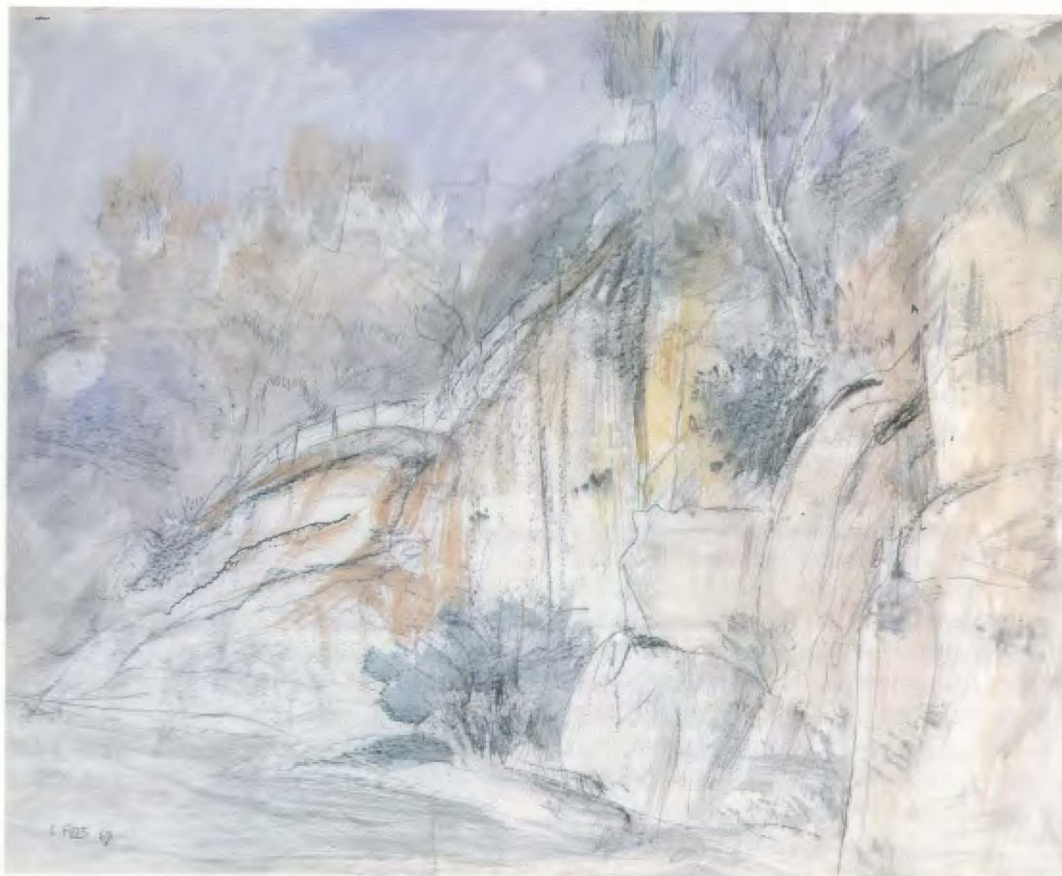
The latest style from the later 1970's is a dialogue between the artist and the universe, rather than between parts of Australia and Europe. Rees has become more interested in painting than in representation. If we ask of a work — is it Sydney? Is it Hobart? It becomes impossible to answer. It is true that Sydney and Hobart have an affinity for the artist, but although the source of every painting is a particular note of nature, this note becomes so transmuted by the artist's mood, that it no longer becomes discernible until one is told.

Morning on the Derwent is a celebration of his courtship with the sun. For Rees, it was almost an impossibility to paint the sun itself, something he dared not try. For months each attempt was quickly covered in a veil of radiance. In *Morning on the Derwent*, painted from the window of the University library, the sun is felt as a symbol for the central concept of the artist's philosophy, Endlessness. He believes that he comes from infinity and will merge into infinity.

The most recent paintings have seen a turning to less dramatic, cooler, moods and tones. The *Twilight* and *Evening* paintings are examples in which Rees comes very close to painting that which

he never intends to paint, abstractions. He has never given up the foothold in representation. As a child he experienced in a field, a sensation of the immensity of nature. It has left him with a fear of open spaces, a fear of wandering far afield to paint, a fear of flying. As a result, a great number of his works have a square in a bottom corner — a shed, a building. Even the most abstract visions are anchored by a diagonal sweep of foreground, particularly in these watercolours of broad bands of land, sea, sky in the oils, and there are few works without the presence, not of people, but of the human touch — buildings, boats, yachts. In these works it is as if he were absorbed in the quiet, the solitude, the beauty of such moments, as were Whistler and David Davies, almost to the point of losing even that foothold on land. The elegiac paleness of the recent work perhaps prefigures another change in direction for the artist approaching ninety years of age.

The immensity of nature is Turner's theme. Rees' paintings do not lead us into the vastness of space. It is not space, but land, sea, sky within reach of his gaze, that is his subject. He loves the world, here and now, as he is enveloped by its aura. The substance of the paint has changed as his philosophy changed emphasis. The paint no longer symbolises the earth itself, but becomes an atmospheric veil that shrouds the earth with mystery. The veil is itself an embodiment of an earthly tangible beauty which is a symbol of the ineffable. The artist has said, 'I don't want to go to Heaven, because it can't be as beautiful as this.' Renee Free, 1984



Study for the Edge of the Forest, 1967
Carbon pencil and wash, 406 x 502

Opposite page, The Distant Derwent, 1970 (The River Derwent)
Oil on canvas, 760 x 1075

Front cover from The Distant Derwent, 1969
Carbon and watercolour on paper, 440 x 605



BIOGRAPHY

- 1895 Lloyd Frederic Rees born on 17 May 1895 at Yeronga, Brisbane, the seventh of eight children. His parents are Owen Rees, of Welsh descent, from Melbourne, and Angele Buerquez of French descent from Mauritius
- 1916 Sees Sydney for the first time, and visits Melbourne
- 1917 Comes to live in Sydney
- 1923-24 Visits Europe
- 1927 Marries Dulcie Metcalfe (died 1928)
- 1931 Marries Marjory Pollard
- 1934 Birth of son, Alan Lloyd Rees. Moves to Northwood, Sydney
- 1942 Retrospective exhibition, Art Gallery of New South Wales
- 1946-83 Instructor and lecturer in art at the School of Architecture, University of Sydney
- 1947 Builds 'Caloola'
- 1952-53 Visits Europe
- 1959-60 Visits Europe
- 1966-67 Visits Europe
- 1967 First of many visits to Tasmania
- 1969-70 Retrospective exhibition, Art Gallery of New South Wales, touring State galleries and Newcastle City Art Gallery, opens 2 October
Publication of memoirs, *The Small Treasures of a Lifetime*, Ure Smith, Sydney 1969
Exhibition, Leveson Street Gallery, Melbourne, September-October
- 1970 Awarded an honorary Doctor of Letters degree, University of Sydney
Exhibition of paintings and drawings, Leveson Street Gallery, Melbourne, opens 28 September
- 1971 Awarded Australian International Co-operation Art Award for 1970
Awarded the McCaughey Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, for the painting *Country 1: Beziers*
Retrospective of drawings from the artist's collection, Von Bertouch Galleries, Newcastle, opens 12 February
Exhibition of paintings and drawings, The Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, 30 October-12 November
- 1972 Publication of *Lloyd Rees* by Renee Free, Lansdowne Press, Melbourne 1972
Speech at Gough Whitlam rally, Sydney Opera House, with Patrick White and others
- 1973 Exhibition of paintings and drawings, Von Bertouch Galleries, Newcastle, 30 March-16 April
Exhibition of recent paintings and drawings, Artarmon Galleries, Sydney, opens 17 May
Visits Europe: France (Chartres, Vezelay, Paris) in July; San Gimignano in August; later Greece and London
Exhibition, New Grafton Gallery, London, 13 September-10 October
- 1974 Exhibition of works inspired by Tuscany and Burgundy, The Macquarie Galleries, Sydney, 19 June-1 July
Exhibition of paintings and drawings, Lister Gallery, Perth, coinciding with the Festival of Perth, 18 February-5 March
- 1975 Exhibition, Von Bertouch Galleries, Newcastle, 27 June-20 July
Anti-Sir John Kerr exhibition, Paddington Town Hall (group exhibition)
Exhibition: 'Cathedrals of France, with emphasis upon Chartres', Artarmon Galleries, Sydney; Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart; David Sumner Gallery, Adelaide
Exhibition: 'A tribute to Lloyd Rees', Warana Festival, Queensland Art Gallery
- 1976 Exhibition: 'Paintings and drawings and the Cathedrals of France', David Sumner Gallery, Adelaide, Adelaide Festival of the Arts, 6 March-18 March
Exhibition: 'European sketches', The Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, 20 May-6 June
Rees' only visit to the Centre of Australia - Ayers Rock, the Olgas, the Macdonnell Ranges
Exhibition of drawings 1932-76 and etchings, 1976, Arts Council, Canberra; Ray Hughes Gallery, Brisbane, 6 October-4 November
Completion of a waterfall in Martin Place, Sydney. Rees is chairman of the fund-raising committee, and he and his wife have guaranteed the funds with their life savings
Granted freedom of the city of Sydney
- 1977 Exhibition: 'The Australian Centre and other works', The Macquarie Galleries, Sydney, 29 June-11 July
Awarded Companion of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael and St George (CMG)
The Trustees Prize for 1977 in honour of Lloyd Rees, Queensland Art Gallery.
Publication of catalogue of Lloyd Rees' works in the collection
Royal Queensland Art Society, 88th Annual Exhibition, guest artist, July
- 1978 Exhibition of oils, pastels and mixed media - 'Northwood, Balmain and Lane Cove', Von Bertouch Galleries, Newcastle 22 March-9 April
Publication of Lou Klepac. *Lloyd Rees: Drawings*, Australian Artist Editions, Artarmon Galleries, Sydney 1978
Exhibition of Etchings: 'A Tribute to Sydney', The Macquarie Galleries, Sydney, 17 May-5 June
- 1979 Exhibition of paintings: 'A Tribute to Sydney', The Macquarie Galleries, Sydney, 19 January-12 February. Book catalogue published
Appears on the Michael Parkinson television programme
Exhibition, Bonython Art Gallery, Adelaide, November
Awarded the McCaughey Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales for *The Great Rock - Dusk*
- 1980 Exhibition of Drawings and the 'Caloola Suite' of lithographs, The Macquarie Galleries, Sydney; The Macquarie Galleries, Canberra
- 1981 Survey exhibition of paintings and drawings organised by University Gallery, University of Melbourne, tours regional galleries in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, is shown at S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
City of Bathurst, honorary Citizenship Certificate, 6 October
- 1982 Exhibition 'Printed works', Art Gallery of Western Australia, 25 February-6 April 1982
Exhibition: 'Late Drawings and Lithographs', Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston, 30 April-30 May 1982; Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, 3 June-3 July; Brisbane Civic Art Gallery and Museum, 15 July-13 August

- Exhibition: 'New Lithographs, 1982', Artarmon Gallery, 9 November 1982
 Exhibition: 'Recent Works', Realities, Melbourne, 1–26 March
 Completes the manuscript of his second book of memoirs
 Guest at Official Opening of the Australian National Gallery, Canberra, 12 October. Invited to meet Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II
 Exhibition of lithographs, Gallery Fifty-two, Claremont, Western Australia, 15 October
 Awarded the Wynne Prize for 1982, Art Gallery of New South Wales, 17 December
 Visits Tasmania 19 December until 20 February 1983
- 1983 Exhibition: 'Orban-Rees', Masterpiece Gallery, Hobart. Opens 18 February
 Exhibition: 'Blue Days on the Derwent', Von Bertouch Galleries, Newcastle
- 1984 Exhibition: 'Lloyd Rees : New Colour Lithographs, The Sandy Bay Set', Artarmon Galleries
 Awarded an Honorary Doctor of Letters Degree, University of Tasmania

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Writings by Lloyd Rees

- The Small Treasures of a Lifetime*, Ure Smith, Sydney 1969
 Foreword to exhibition catalogue *The Cathedrals of France, with emphasis upon Chartres*. Artarmon Galleries, Sydney 1975
 Manuscript of memoirs, 1982

Writings about Lloyd Rees

- Renee Free, 'Lloyd Rees Retrospective', exhibition catalogue, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1969
 Renee Free, *Lloyd Rees*. Lansdowne Press, Melbourne 1972, reprinted 1979
 Renee Free, Introduction to 'Tribute to Sydney' suite by Lloyd Rees, Macquarie Galleries, Sydney 1979
 Lou Klepac (ed.), Introduction to *Lloyd Rees: Drawings*. Australian Artists Editions, Sydney, 1978
 Lou Klepac 'Homage to Lloyd Rees', *Art and Australia*, vol 18 no 2 summer 1980
 Lily Brett-Lovett 'Lloyd Rees — Australia's Old Master' *Pol* magazine, July–August 1980
 Renee Free, 'Lloyd Rees: The Later Works' (Sydney Craftsman's Press, 1983)

A full bibliography is published by Barbara Chapman in 'Lloyd Rees: Late Drawings and Lithographs', exhibition catalogue, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston 1982



Dawn at Sandy Bay, 1984, (Golden Sunrise, Sandy Bay)
 Oil on canvas mounted on board, 406 x 515

The Fine Arts Committee wish to acknowledge the considerable assistance of

Alan Rees, Renee Free, Jon Williamson, Chris Cowles,
 Airlie Alam, Meg Taylor, Frances Butterfield, Hendrik Kolenberg
 Rod Ewins, Penny Hawson and John Farrow
 Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery

Works were kindly lent by a number of generous individuals and institutions including:

Lloyd Rees, Dr R S Jensen, P T and T L Sexton
 Nevin Hurst, Masterpiece Gallery
 Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery

LIST OF WORKS

Measurements are in mm, height then breadth

Bracketed Titles represent alternative Titles

Works marked with an asterisk are illustrated in this catalogue

Study for the Edge of the Forest, 1967* (RE-CORD)
Carbon pencil and wash, 406 x 502
Signed lower left: L. Rees '67
Illust. Free, Renee, *Lloyd Rees : The Later Works*, (Sydney Craftsman's Press, 1983)
Private Collection.

The Edge of the Forest, 1967
Oil on canvas mounted on masonite, 667 x 825
Signed lower left: L. Rees '67
Exh. 1969/70, *Lloyd Rees Retrospective*, Art Gallery of New South Wales and touring all State galleries and Newcastle City Art Gallery. 1981, *Tasmania Visited*, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.
Illust. Free, Renee, *Lloyd Rees : The Later Works*, (Sydney Craftsman's Press, 1983), colour plate 13.
Private Collection.

The Derwent from Sandy Bay, 1967
Carbon, pencil, pen and ink and wash on paper, 185 x 250
Signed lower left: L. Rees '67
Exh. 1982, *Lloyd Rees : Late Drawings and Lithographs*, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston.
Illust. 1982, *Lloyd Rees : Late Drawings and Lithographs*, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston, page 45.
Private Collection.

The Tempest, 1968
Pen, ink and watercolour on card, 95 x 205
Exh. 1982, *Lloyd Rees : Late Drawings and Lithographs*, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston.
Illust. *Lloyd Rees : Drawings* Lou Klepac (ed.). Publisher John Brackenreg. (Australian Artists Editions, Artarmon Galleries, 1978).
Private Collection.

The Distant Derwent, 1969*
Carbon and watercolour on paper, 440 x 605
Signed lower left: L. Rees, 1969
Illust. Free, Renee, *Lloyd Rees, The Later Works*, (Sydney Craftsman's Press), 1983, plate 14
Private Collection.

The Distant Derwent, 1970 (The River Derwent)*
Oil on canvas, 760 x 1075
Signed lower left: L. Rees '70
Exh. 1981, *Tasmania Visited*, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery
Illust. Free, Renee, *Lloyd Rees : The Later Works*, (Sydney Craftsman's Press), 1983, plate 15
Private Collection.

North Down, 1971 (RE-WIRE) GAD
Pen, ink and watercolour on paper, 190 x 245
Signed lower left: Lloyd Rees '71
Exh. Macquarie Galleries, Sydney, 1981, *Tasmania Visited*, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. 1982, *Lloyd Rees : Late Drawings and Lithographs*, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery
Private Collection.

Channel View, Tasmania, 1971
Pen, ink and watercolour on paper, 440 x 605
Signed and dated lower right
Exh. 1981/82, *Tasmania Visited*, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. Cat.No. 43
1982, *Lloyd Rees : Late Drawings and Lithographs*, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston
Illust. 1981/82, *Tasmania Visited*, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Cat.No. 43
Collection: Nevin Hurst, Masterpiece Gallery, Hobart.

Evening on the Derwent, 1982
Oil on canvas, 810 x 964
Signed lower left: L. Rees '82
Exh. 1983, *Orban-Rees*, Masterpiece Gallery, Hobart
Collection: P.T. and T.L. Sexton.

Midsummer Eve, Tasmania, 1982 (RE WIRE)
Oil on canvas, 760 x 1015
Signed lower left
Exh. 1983, *Orban-Rees*, Masterpiece Gallery, Hobart
Collection: Nevin Hurst, Masterpiece Gallery, Hobart.

Morning on the Derwent, 1982
Oil on canvas, 1220 x 1820
Signed and dated lower-left
Exh. 1982/83 *Wynne Prize*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, prizewinner
1983, *Australian Painters*, Golden Age Fine Art Gallery, Ballarat
Illust. 1983, *Australian Painters*, Golden Age Fine Art Gallery, Ballarat
1983, 'Exhibition Commentary', *Art and Australia*, Vol.21 No.1, Spring, colour plate page 22
Free, Renee, *Lloyd Rees : The Later Works*, (Sydney Craftsman's Press, 1983), colour plate 19, page 79
Purchased 1983 (Special State Government grant)
Collection: Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

Impression on the Derwent, 1982
Watercolour and pastel, 365 x 550
Signed in pencil, bottom left-hand corner
Collection: Dr. R.S. Jensen.

Tasmanian Twilight, 1982
Watercolour, 535 x 725
Signed in pencil, bottom right-hand corner
Exh. 1983 *Orban-Rees*, Masterpiece Gallery, Hobart
Collection: Dr. R.S. Jensen

River Derwent by Moonlight, 1983 (Evening No.2)
Oil on canvas mounted on board, 510 x 610
Signed lower left: L. Rees '83
Exh. 1983, Von Bertouch Gallery, Newcastle, 1983, Macquarie Galleries, Sydney
Private Collection.

Dawn at Sandy Bay, 1984, (Golden Sunrise, Sandy Bay)*
Oil on canvas mounted on board, 406 x 515
Signed lower left: Rees '84
Private Collection.

Twilight, 1984
Oil on canvas on masonite, 813 x 1103
Signed lower left: Rees '84
Private Collection.

Dusk on the Derwent, 1984
Watercolour on paper, 381 x 565
Signed lower left: L. Rees '84
Private Collection.

Afternoon, Mt. Nelson, 1984
Watercolour on paper, 381 x 565
Signed lower left: L. Rees '84
Private Collection.

Fine Arts Gallery
University of Tasmania
11 to 30 September 1984

Gallery hours
Monday to Friday 10.00 am to 4.00 pm
Saturday 10.00 am to 12.00 noon
Sunday 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm

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